

THE FIFE COUNCIL - FIFE COUNCIL – BLENDED MEETING

Council Chamber, 6th Floor, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes

19 September 2024

10.00 am – 4.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Jim Leishman (Convener), Tom Adams, David Alexander, Blair Allan, Naz Anis-Miah, Lesley Backhouse, Alistair Bain, Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw, David Barratt, Auxi Barrera, John Beare, Aude Boubaker-Calder, Patrick Browne, John Caffrey, James Calder, Ken Caldwell, Alistair Cameron, Ian Cameron, Alex Campbell, Rod Cavanagh, Eugene Clarke, Fiona Corps, Altany Craik, Colin Davidson, Dave Dempsey, Sean Dillon, Linda Erskine, Julie Ford, Derek Glen, Brian Goodall, Peter Gulline, Jean Hall-Muir, Judy Hamilton, Alycia Hayes, Cara Hilton, Stefan Hoggan, Gary Holt, Andy Jackson, Margaret Kennedy, Louise Kennedy-Dalby, Allan Knox, Robin Lawson, James Leslie, Kathleen Leslie, Rosemary Liewald, Carol Lindsay, Jane Ann Liston, Mary Lockhart, Donald Lothian, David MacDiarmid, Julie MacDougall, Lea McLelland, Lynn Mowatt, Sarah Neal, Derek Noble, John OBrien, Nicola Patrick, Gordon Pryde, David Ross, Sam Steele, Alistair Suttie, Jonny Tepp, Ann Verner, Andrew Verrecchia, Ross Vettraino, Craig Walker, Darren Watt, Daniel Wilson, Jan Wincott and Conner Young.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Al Clark and David Graham.

132. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No. 22.

133. CIVIC BUSINESS BULLETIN

Decision

The council noted the Civic Business Bulletin.

134. MINUTE

The Provost, seconded by Councillor Dempsey, moved that the minute of the meeting of Fife Council of 16 May 2024 be approved.

Decision

The council approved the minute.

135. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES

Minutes of the undernoted committees and sub-committees, as contained in the volume of minutes, were submitted for accuracy:-

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- (1) West and Central Planning Committee of 1 May, 29 May, 26 June, 28 August 2024.
- (2) North East Planning Committee of 8 May, 5 June, 14 August 2024.
- (3) Fife Planning Review Body of 17 June, 2 September 2024.
- (4) Regulation and Licensing Committee of 9 April, 11 June, 9 July, 13 August 2024.
- (5) Cabinet Committee of 9 May, 6 June, 15 August 2024.
- (6) Standards, Audit and Risk Committee of 23 May, 28 June, 22 August 2024.
- (7) Pensions Committee of 28 June 2024.
- (8) Glenrothes Area Committee of 22 May, 21 August 2024.
- (9) Levenmouth Area Committee of 15 May, 21 August 2024.
- (10) City of Dunfermline Area Committee of 18 June, 20 August 2024.
- (11) Kirkcaldy Area Committee of 25 June, 27 August 2024.
- (12) North East Fife Area Committee of 19 June, 28 August 2024.
- (13) Cowdenbeath Area Committee of 12 June, 4 September 2024.
- (14) South and West Fife Area Committee of 12 June, 4 September 2024.
- (15) Education Scrutiny Committee of 7 May 2024.
- (16) Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee of 13 June, 29 August 2024.
- (17) People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 27 June 2024.
- (18) Environment, Transportation and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee of 28 May, 3 September 2024.
- (19) Fife Health and Social Care Integration Joint Board of 28 March, 31 May 2024.

Decision

The council noted the minutes.

136. LEADER'S REPORT

The council considered a report by the Leader of the Council on a number of strategic issues. The Leader provided updates on a number of issues in response to questions from members.

Decision

The council noted the Leader's report.

137. QUESTION TIME

In terms of Standing Order No. 9.3, the following questions were submitted.

Question 1 from Councillor Jonny Tepp

Parking in front of dropped kerbs is a real concern in many parts of my own constituency and probably across Fife. What steps can this administration take to improve the situation for those who need to make use of dropped kerbs?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Strategic Planning)

Yes, and the pavement parking ban will allow us to do that.

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Roads & Transportation Services have been assessing the resource implications of the ban including exemptions and infrastructure implications and a report on this will be presented to Cabinet Committee.

Supplementary Question

Have we made any further progress or spent any money on pursuing the pavement parking ban since the last time I asked about it? This won't resolve issues of parking in front of dropped kerbs.

Answer

This is a problem all over Fife. The legislation and implementation of this has taken longer than expected and likely to be in 2025 but this will help.

Question 2 from Councillor Jonny Tepp

There is a lining works backlog that has been building over the last two years due to increasing downtime of a deteriorating vehicle (we are told). Re-lining works on the Cupar Road, Newport where Newport PS is located were not completed by the start of new school year as promised earlier in the calendar year. How big is the backlog? When will it be caught up? What areas are affected?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Strategic Planning)

Reliability issues with the in-house lining vehicle, and a backlog of subcontracted refurbishment lining works have contributed to a Fife wide delay in road markings.

The combined backlog should be cleared by the end of October, noting the potential impacts of inclement weather at this time of year.

Supplementary Question

When will we be replacing the defective vehicle which has been worse over the last couple of years and can we develop a KPI that assesses the seriousness of the lining issues as we don't have any means of measuring performance.

Answer

A replacement vehicle will be part of the capital plan and I will raise the issue of KPIs with the head of service.

Question 3 from Councillor James Calder

What engagement has taken place with families regarding free bus travel to the new St Columba's and Woodmill High Schools?

Answer (Spokesperson for Education)

There have been three communications with families in February, May and June, these were shared directly with parents/carers/families from the schools. These are detailed below:

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February (Groupcall message)

We would like to encourage parents and carers to apply for the Young Persons' Free Bus Travel. When we move to the new campus there will be no buses serving Woodmill High School, therefore having the National Entitlement Card will allow your child to access a service bus that will serve the new school and with no cost implication.

You can find, how to apply for this on the [school website](#), you can also view the [Young Scots NEC Rewards and Advantages](#). If anyone needs access to IT to complete the application then please contact the school to make arrangements to come in and use a school device.

May (Extract from SWAY)

Fife Council provides home to school transport for a secondary school aged young person who attends his/her catchment area school or other educational establishment and lives than two miles from it, by the shortest available walking route.

For those pupils attending **Woodmill HS** at the campus, there will be no pupils living in the catchment area that are entitled to have transport provided. Consequently, there will be no school buses operating directly to Woodmill HS.

There will be 11 school bus services operating to **St Columba's RC HS** from August 2024. The new bus routes have been designed to accommodate the entitled pupils living in the catchment area.

Information regarding the new bus services will be available from the beginning of August and parents/carers/young people should check <https://www.travelfife.com/> to make sure they know which bus to use and where to get on.

Pupils will be able to use their NEC card to travel for free using service buses. More information on available services in the area have been sent out on Groupcall and through the Sway newsletter.

June (Groupcall message)

Service Bus Routes

As of the 18th June Stagecoach have issued an amended/updated set of Bus Routes from the 19th August take into consideration the increased demand for bus transportation for the new campus. You may wish see which service routes run close to your homes to create options for getting to and from school.

Please access the new bus routes timetables using the link below

[ServiceUpdatesArticle | Stagecoach \(stagecoachbus.com\)](#)

If you have any questions, please contact us to discuss. There will be staff present in school from the start of August.

Transportation Services identified that there would be no Woodmill pupils entitled to transport when the move to the new campus took place so this was part of the communication at an early stage.

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As part of the process for the move to the new Campus several walk route assessments were carried out and routes were deemed accessible.

Supplementary Question

Would the Administration consider engaging with those just missing out on school transport, i.e. areas of Pitcorthie?

Answer

Aware of issues and will brief local members when an update is available.

Question 4 from Councillor Margaret Kennedy

Fife Council has made various efforts over the years to address support for those recognised as hard of hearing. It is however recognised that this work is not simply ensuring that we have a loop system. There are a wide range of people for whom a loop system or indeed BSL/sign language would not be suitable and they feel excluded from many public events in our buildings.

Cupar Hard of Hearing Group have expressed concern that our facilities are limited in their ability to enable people living with hearing challenges to feel fully included.

What provision is currently in our buildings and do they meet current standards to optimise inclusivity?

Answer (Leader of the Administration)

Fife Council has a prime objective, and is committed, to ensure all Council Services are accessible to all (irrespective of disability), enable active participatory engagement and that people are not inadvertently excluded.

Overall, several years and deploying many resources, Fife Council has already made good progress by implementing reasonable adjustments under the Disability Discrimination Act and the Council's equality standards. Most Council buildings are already largely accessible to the public - including Council staff that might have (physical and hearing) disabilities and impairments

In the preparation of this response, it should be noted that out of 38,000 contact transactions there have been no recorded complaints logged which suggests that no one with hearing impairment or disability is having significant challenges with our existing loop systems or are unable to engage in Council meetings.

Current Hearing support provision in public buildings

The Council's four main "public" access buildings are Kirkcaldy Town House, Fife House, Dunfermline City Chambers, Cupar County Buildings. The public access these buildings. The Council has already ensured hearing equipment is provided to enable people with auditory disabilities and impairments not to be of feel excluded. These buildings have the following equipment in place:

Kirkcaldy Town House

Fixed Loop Systems/Portable loops within public meeting rooms/Reception and fixed infrared hearing systems within Council Chambers

Fife House

Fixed Loop Systems within the building and Counter Loop at reception and customer services. Portable loop systems are available on request.

Dunfermline City Chambers

Fixed Loop Systems

Cupar County Buildings

4 portable systems, one in use at the customer service desk and one fixed loop system in the County Hall.

The reception desks at these buildings are equipped with “loop” systems, including portable auditory units that can be supplied if requested by services. Reception staff have been trained to understand and support the needs of people with hearing impairments so that they are not inadvertently denied access to services.

Council officers already advise and provide appropriate communication support for meetings: for example BSL Interpreters, Electronic Note Takers, Hands-On (tactile) Interpreters and Lip-Speakers. British Sign Language sessions and Deaf Awareness sessions can be booked for Fife Council Employees.

Fife Council broadcasts Council and Committee meetings via Microsoft Teams and live transcription can be switched on by remote individual users.

Other services have responded:

Schools

Soundfield Systems are included in all new builds in Fife. For our other schools which have deaf learners (all levels of hearing impaired) Soundfield Systems or other appropriate sound systems are in place to support the pupils' access to information.

Where our young people have a hearing impairment, specific tailored plans are designed to support the young person in their school.

Where a parent/carer has a hearing impairment, tailored plans would be discussed with them to enable the parent to take part in school events.

Communities and Neighbourhoods

There is a mixed picture in Community Use venues with 28/91 buildings across Fife providing hearing equipment to enable people with auditory disabilities and impairments not to feel excluded.

Further proposed action

The Council is continually developing and improving services and appreciates that there may be some individual (and groups) for whom a loop system or BSL/sign language may not be suitable, leading to feelings of exclusion. This important matter raised by the Cupar Hard of Hearing group is no exception. Therefore, officers propose the following actions:

- 1) Facilities Management Service is willing to meet with the Cupar Hard of Hearing Group to understand their ideas and suggestions.
- 2) Implement further compliance checks testing of hearing equipment.
- 3) Explore and where necessary further training on the use of hearing systems within corporate buildings.
- 4) Discuss the matter at the officers' Corporate Equality Group on potential improvements.
- 5) Consider the advancements in hearing aid (and other) technology and how the Council might reasonably adapt existing services to minimise exclusion.

Question 5 from Councillor Jane Ann Liston

How many free lets and irregular tenancies are there in FC owned and managed public buildings, and what oversight is there to manage risks of fire, flood etc?

Answer (Spokesperson for Communities and Leisure Services)

Fife Council has no free let's or irregular leases. It is understood the question relates to a licence arrangement for a property in St Andrews that dates from the 1850s on which a paper will be produced for consideration by the Area Committee.

Supplementary Question

What will Fife Council do to rectify this anomaly in the interests of fairness and in the event of damage to the rest of the building in question to ensure that they would not be held responsible for repairs?

Answer

This is a complex question which requires to be discussed with the service. A response will be provided in due course.

Question 6 from Councillor Brian Goodall

When did the Housing and Building Services Spokesperson become aware of the almost £30 million underspend in the Fife Affordable Housing Programme for the year 2023-24?

Answer (Spokesperson for Housing and Building Services)

The 2023-24-year end HRA capital outturn was reported to Cabinet on 15th August 2024. This detailed the slippage of £29.869m on the Affordable housing Programme. This was the first time the slippage, totalling this amount, was reported to members. The Housing Spokesperson was advised of the

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specific issues associated with the liquidation of First Endeavour in early 2023. The failure of First Endeavour exacerbated the normal programme slippage by over £10m. The Communities year end outturn will be taken to People & Communities on 26th September 2024.

Supplementary Question

Does the spokesperson understand her responsibility to manage this and why was more not done during the year?

Answer

Slippage happens in programmes and money will be carried forward into next year and rely on finance to provide the final outturn figures.

Question 7 from Councillor Lesley Backhouse

What is the current average cost (excluding any Scottish Government subsidy) of constructing a new build Council House, and what is the current average cost (excluding any Scottish Government subsidy) of buying a house from the open market to become a Council House?

Answer (Spokesperson for Housing and Building Services)

The cost in 2024/25 for building a new council houses is £225k on average. The costs of buying exiting properties on the private market are on average £110k and the Council includes an upgrade cost to the SHQS of £15k, resulting in a total cost of £125k per property.

Supplementary Question

Given the difference to purchase rather than build, why is there no budget allocated in 25/26 for housing acquisitions and with the HRA sitting with a £26m surplus?

Answer

A blended approach is taken and buyback where appropriate. Level of subsidy is aligned to legally committed projects.

Question 8 from Councillor Lesley Backhouse

What is the average completion time from a decision to build Council houses to them being occupied and what is the average time taken to purchase a suitable house from the open market to become a Council house from a decision to occupancy?

Answer (Spokesperson for Housing and Building Services)

New build start to finish time - 18-24 months on average but some developments have taken in excess of years (example- former co-op building Kirkcaldy. Housing Acquisitions start to finish time - Offer in and going through legal 8-12 weeks - get keys, asbestos survey and works and then bring up to SHQS, standard 6 - 16weeks - total time 28 weeks.

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The Provost advised that, in terms of SO 9.3(7), one response would be provided to cover questions 9–12, 14–15 and 19-22 below.

Question 9 from Councillor Nicola Patrick

What is the current assessment period for assessing a Fife Housing Register Application?

Question 10 from Councillor Nicola Patrick

How many people are currently waiting for over four weeks for a Housing Functional Needs Assessment?

Question 11 from Councillor Nicola Patrick

What is the current longest time anyone has been waiting for a Housing Functional Needs Assessment?

Question 12 from Councillor Nicola Patrick

How many different lists are there for those awaiting Housing Functional Needs Assessments?

Answer (Spokesperson for Housing and Building Services)

There are currently 358 Fife Housing Register applications awaiting assessment. The current average processing time is around 15 days. Application numbers have remained consistent since the declaration of the Housing Emergency in March 2024 with relatively minor variations.

At 10/09/24, 159 forms are waiting longer than the 4 week mark, some of these are complex, missing information or awaiting input from an OT or another professional involved in their case. The Council is currently assessing forms from 24/07/24 with a current processing time of 6 weeks. This is due to a significant increase in the numbers of HFNA being submitted since the Housing Emergency where numbers have increased by around 50%.

The oldest form awaiting assessment is from mid-April 2024. In this case the Council is awaiting additional information from the housing applicant. Assessments out with the current 6-week assessment period are often complex, require further assessment or we are awaiting further information from the applicant or other agencies.

The Council operates one list for Housing Functional Needs Assessments by date order of application within this we fast track any assessments where there is an imminent offer of housing. The team also undertake other areas of work in relation to enquiries re points, allocations queries and review of recommendations.

Supplementary Question

Given the council's policy that an HNA should be completed within 4 weeks and previously assured these were back to being assessed in timescales, why in the time of a self declared housing emergency, has the Spokesperson allowed these delays to happen again?

Answer

The delays are due to a significant increase of around 50% in requests since the housing emergency was declared.

Supplementary Question

I have been advised there are 2 separate lists, after 2 years of non-compliance the list is 4 times beyond policy and the hidden list is 7 times beyond policy. What is the housing spokesperson doing this year to get this back on track?

Answer

A number of additional staff have been drafted in to help with the backlog and this will be reported to the relevant scrutiny committee in due course.

Supplementary Question

Is the housing spokesperson not ashamed that HNAs are again exceeding the 4 week policy she personally championed?

Answer

There are issues around it which have been explained, significant increase in demand and extra staff drafted in to support.

Question 13 from Councillor Sam Steele

Why were Transfer Housing Options Interviews in some parts of Fife recently suspended?

Answer (Spokesperson for Housing & Building Services)

As a result of Housing Options Officer shortages due to illness and holidays, the Area Housing Manager in South and West Fife made the operational decision to suspend transfer options interviews and advise local Members accordingly. Following local Members bringing this to the attention of the Head of Service and Service Manager, resources were realigned from other parts of Fife and normal service resumed within a couple of days.

Supplementary Question

Do you agree that we should be upping our level of service and could we have missed opportunities to generate letting chains?

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Answer

It was stopped for a matter of days and I am unaware of any missed opportunities.

Question 14 from Councillor Louise Kennedy-Dalby

How many stairlifts have been installed by Fife Council, in each Area Committee, in each of the last three years (including where the resident has paid a portion of the costs) following an Occupational Therapy assessment?

Question 15 from Councillor Louise Kennedy-Dalby

What is the current waiting time, in each Area Committee, for a stairlift installation from the time an OT assessment confirms it is required?

Answer (Spokesperson for Housing and Building Services)

The statistics provided below reflect completed stairlift installations in that financial year. All stairlifts are considered temporary adaptations and, as such, Service Users are not required to contribute any costs.

Financial Year Number complete Area Breakdown

2021 / 22 195 in Fife: Area Breakdown: South West Fife –33; Dunfermline – 27; Cowdenbeath – 25; Kirkcaldy – 31; Glenrothes - 33; Leven – 31; North East Fife – 15

2022 / 23 265 in Fife: Area Breakdown: South West Fife -40; Dunfermline - 37; Cowdenbeath -40; Kirkcaldy - 40; Glenrothes - 46; Leven - 40; North East Fife - 22

2023 / 24 237 in Fife: Area Breakdown: South West Fife - 33; Dunfermline - 35; Cowdenbeath - 35; Kirkcaldy - 35; Glenrothes - 35; Leven - 35; North East Fife - 29

2024 / 25 (to August) 153 in Fife: Area Breakdown: South West Fife - 21; Dunfermline - 23; Cowdenbeath - 23; Kirkcaldy - 23; Glenrothes - 23; Leven - 22; North East Fife - 18

Our contractor is held to a standard timeframe across Fife so there is no variation to the average waiting time across areas. The average waiting time for installation is 39 days across all Areas in Fife. There are some variations in individual installation dates due to the complexity of the stair lift and arranging access to the property.

Supplementary Question

Why is it taking the best part of a year to address and does the Spokesperson have any consideration to the pain and suffering she is inflicting on families and the NHS implications for delayed discharges?

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Answer

In recent analysis, Fife came out as one of the top performing councils for housing adaptations.

Question 16 from Councillor Ken Caldwell

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry created to examine the circumstances leading up to and surrounding the fire at Grenfell Tower on the night of 14 June 2017, published its Phase 2 report on 4th September 2024. What arrangements are in place to advise Committee/s of the Council about the Council's assessment of the report and any implications there may be for Fife Council?

Answer (Spokesperson for Housing and Building Services)

The Head of Housing is currently examining the Phase 2 report's recommendations with the Council's Tower Block Review Group and will report to the appropriate Committee prior to Christmas.

Following the Grenfell tragedy in 2017, the Council acted swiftly to assess the cladding at all of our 12 Multi-Storey blocks of flats in Fife alongside the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service. At that time, Committee was advised that the particular type of cladding used at the Grenfell Tower was not used on any council properties in Fife. Furthermore, the Council's assessment and that of Scottish Fire & Rescue was that all cladding used on the Multi-Storey blocks of flats in Fife were assessed as either zero or low risk. In the case of the low risk cladding used at Swan & Memorial Courts, the Council has begun work to strip the existing cladding and replace it with zero risk mineral wool cladding as used in our other Tower Blocks.

The Council worked closely with the TRAs and tenants and residents in our Tower Blocks to ensure that they had up-to-date information and were involved in meetings to discuss the tragedy at Grenfell. The Council does not employ Tenant Management Companies/Organisations to deliver services to our tenants as was the case with Grenfell. That is best done by a direct relationship between the Council and tenants.

Supplementary Question

When and where will any assessment be reported?

Answer

This is currently being examined by the Head of Housing Services with the Tower Block Review Group and will be reported to the appropriate committee prior to Christmas.

Question 17 from Councillor Sarah Neal

What assessment has the Education Service and its school management teams taken in relation to the 'Mobile phone guidance for Scotland's schools' published by the Scottish Government on 15 August 2024?

Answer

Each school in Fife is required to develop its own policy in this regard.

To support this, updated Fife Council guidance for schools and staff, with regards to use of digital technology, was considered by the Cabinet Committee in November 2023.

The purpose of the Fife Council guidance/policy is to provide our educational establishments with advice on how to develop their own policies that encourage safe and responsible use of personal mobile technology in school, and beyond. This guidance was subsequently issued to schools and during 2024 our schools have been reviewing their own policies, in light of this updated guidance.

This new Scottish Government guidance provides similar support and advice for schools. However, following the publication of this Scottish Government Guidance on Mobile Phones in Scotland's Schools in August 2024, the Directorate is reflecting on the guidance already provided, to determine whether any additional elements should be included in our guidance, and schools are considering whether there should be any further amendments to their own policies.

Supplementary Question

Is there any intelligence about neighbourhood or Fife Council approaches being developed?

Answer

I will look into this and respond outwith the meeting.

Question 18 from Councillor David Alexander

The Chancellor of the Exchequer advised, in relation to cuts in Pension Credit, in the House of Commons in Westminster on September 3rd *"All local authorities, have been written to about how they can play their part in identifying those pensioners who are entitled to pension credit but are not getting it. The Department for Work and Pensions will also bring together the administration of pension credit and housing benefit, so that pensioner households receiving housing benefit will also receive any pension credit they are entitled to"* What correspondence has the Council received from the Treasury and what steps are the Council taking in relation to the letter received?

Answer (Leader of the Administration)

The Council uses its own information (via the LIFT product) to identify potential households who may be eligible for pension credit. The DWP also have information which they share with us to identify potential under-claiming.

We have just kicked off the third Pension credit take-up campaign which will be overseen by the Welfare Reform Delivery Group and will be managed by CARF and the Financial Wellbeing Team.

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The first stage of the campaign is to write to the 417 identified households as we need their permission to progress claiming Pension Credits. These letters will be issued shortly.

The Council has received the letter stated in the question from the DWP and we are progressing via the Welfare Reform Delivery Group.

Question 19 from Councillor John Beare

The Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee was made aware at its meeting of 29th August that 'Soft Working Groups' existed within the Council which included elected members, how many of these 'soft working groups' with elected member involvement which are in existence or have existed since May of 2022?

Question 20 from Councillor John Beare

The Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee was made aware at its meeting of 29th August that 'Soft Working Groups' existed within the Council which included elected members, what is or has been the remit of each of these 'soft working groups' with elected member involvement which are in existence or have existed since May of 2022?

Question 21 from Councillor John Beare

The Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee was made aware at its meeting of 29th August that 'Soft Working Groups' existed within the Council which included elected members, what members are or have been on each of these 'soft working groups' since May of 2022?

Question 22 from Councillor John Beare

The Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee was made aware at its meeting of 29th August that 'Soft Working Groups' existed within the Council and included elected members, what governance and transparency arrangements are in or have been in place for each of these 'soft working groups' since May of 2022?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Strategic Planning)

There are no soft working groups. Officers have responded to requests from members for information.

Question 23 from Councillor John Beare

Since the meeting of the Cabinet Committee of 15th August concerning the Bereavement Services Cemetery Strategy, what progress has been made with the Development Plan Team to advance the proposal from the Glenrothes Area Committee in relation to making provision for a cemetery in Glenrothes?

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Answer (Spokesperson for Communities and Leisure Services)

Discussions continue with the local plan team to identify a possible site for a cemetery in Glenrothes which would be included in the next iteration of the Local Development Plan.

Supplementary Question

When will and where will we see plans?

Answer

Glenrothes Area Committee will receive a report but do not have a timescale for this.

Question 24 from Councillor David Barratt

It was confirmed via a members briefing in May that there remain significant staff shortages in the Flooding, Shoreline & Harbours Service. What is the current status of unfilled posts in this Service, and what steps have been taken to address this since May?

Answer (Spokesperson for Environment and Climate Change)

The recruitment of experienced specialist staff continues to be a challenge, initial advertisements did not attract suitable candidates, hence readvertisement is currently ongoing. In the interim, to help address this staffing shortfall and maintain service delivery, an external specialist consultant has now been appointed to provide assistance with flooding and coastal matters until these permanent posts are filled. Vacancies within such specialist areas are common throughout the sector and particularly pronounced in Local Authorities across Scotland

The current vacancies are:

- Lead Consultant – FS&H: 1 (**vacant**)
- Consultant Engineer - Flooding: 1 (**vacant**)
- Consultant Engineer – Harbours & Shoreline: 1 (**vacant**)
- Consultant Engineer – Shoreline: 1 temporary post (**vacant**)

Supplementary Question

Do you consider that flooding is being sufficiently prioritised by the council particularly in SWF?

Answer

Flooding matters will be addressed as a matter of urgency when we have the staff available but this hasn't been helped by the recent reduction in funding for flooding by Scottish Government.

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Question 25 from Councillor David Barratt

It is understood that significant delays in the Inverkeithing Heritage Regeneration project were in part down to staff shortages in Roads and Transportation Service and the delayed production of tender drawings. What is the current status of unfilled posts in this Service and what steps have been taken to address this?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Strategic Planning)

The Roads and Lighting Contracts team within Roads & Transportation Services that led on the delivering of this project have now filled two vacant technician posts.

Supplementary Question

Has the council learned lessons from this and is the council agile enough to identify risks and allocate resources as appropriate?

Answer

We are probably not agile enough. Work starts first week in October and all parties are working together to deliver the project.

Question 26 from Councillor David Barratt

What projects (with a budget of over £500k) are awaiting design or tender documentation to be complete within Roads and Transportation or Property Services and when were each of these projects forwarded to the Service to be actioned?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Strategic Planning)

Roads & Transportation Services deliver a range of projects and programmes on annual basis and those of significance are detailed in the capital plan programme. In relation to the question and the receipt of projects from other sources....

There are currently three programmes/projects, namely:

- the **Leven Connectivity Programme** – associated with delivery of the rail link
- the **Dunfermline Strategic Transportation Intervention Measures** - which are the infrastructure needs identified to accommodate the planned housing expansion, and
- **City Square, Dunfermline** which is a public realm improvement

The first two programmes are complex and comprise several sub-projects. The projects and the dates these were received by Roads and Transportation Services are:

Leven Connectivity Programme (Related to Leven Rail Link) - (which is collaborative working with SEPA and Green Action Trust and funding through LUF and Sustrans funding).

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Active Travel Network On-Road – July 2022

Mountfleurie Footbridge – July 2022

Active Travel Network Off-Road (River Park Routes) - March 2023

Dunfermline Strategic Intervention Measures (Joint work with the Planning Service)

Northern Link Road, East End – July 2020

Northern Link Road, Townhill/ Whitefield Rd – July 2020

Grange Road – July 2020

Dunfermline City Centre:

City Square, Dunfermline - July 2022

Property Services have two projects. Pitcoudie Primary School upgrades which was received in Dec 22 and Kirkcaldy Leisure Centre Pool Refurbishment which was received in Sept 24. The affordable housing programme work is procured through an external framework hence is outwith the scope of this question.

Question 27 from Councillor David Barratt

How many designs for projects have Roads and Transportation or Property Services contracted out to professional design organisations/companies since May 2022?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Strategic Planning)

Since May 2022, Roads and Transportation Services has engaged Consultants on 31 projects, either delivering the design in its entirety or providing specialist design input on specific elements of a project, where the Service doesn't have the expertise, ie traffic signal design/ specialist flood modelling etc.

Structural Services = 24

Sustainable Transport & Parking = 3

Passenger Transport Service = 1

Road & Lighting Contracts = 3

In Property Services, they have had 194 projects where external design support has been used. However, the vast majority of these are for smaller packages of design support, e.g. civil/structural and mechanical/ electrical which are then fed into the overall design package.

Supplementary Question

Would it be possible to have a member briefing advising of staff shortages across the council affecting projects?

Answer

Yes this can be arranged.

Question 28 from Councillor Daniel Wilson

Can the Transport spokesperson provide an update to the discussions that have been ongoing between the Council and Network Rail relating to the provision of a safe rail crossing at Double Dykes, Thornton?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Strategic Planning)

The Council, through Roads & Transportation Services, has held discussions with Transport Scotland on the potential funding of a crossing (outline conceptual estimates suggest an approx cost of £2.0- £2.5m). Transport Scotland confirmed that funding of a crossing is not included within the budget for the Leven Rail Link and that funding and justification for a crossing would be through Active Travel sources. Roads & Transportation Services has explored this route with regards to the promotion of Active Travel links, around the location of the proposed footbridge, and at this stage indications are that this location does not meet the criteria for Active Travel funding.

Supplementary Question

Will the transport Spokesperson commit to attend these community council meetings and provide an update to the community?

Answer

We have had communications with the community council and have been clear and transparent with them on the position. We are trying to find a resolution to this.

Question 29 from Councillor Dave Dempsey

What steps can be taken to reduce the long delays between reporting vegetation encroaching onto adopted pavements and footpaths and action being taken to cut it back?

Answer (Spokesperson for Environment and Climate Change)

In many cases there is no quick way to short cut the current procedures which is based on a legal process.

Under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 the Council has powers to apply an enforcement notice to landowners/occupiers to take action to cut back vegetation from the adopted road boundary. The legal notice gives 28 days to landowners/occupier to action works, failing this the Council can intervene, and undertake works and recover reasonably incurred costs.

However, as a good neighbour, the Council has adopted two informal stages prior to this formal legal enforcement notice, which are:

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Stage 1 Initial contact with landowner gives them 2 weeks to reply. If vegetation is coming from a residential property this generally isn't a problem however, where it is from fields etc. it can take several weeks for the landowner to be identified due to the time to undertake land searches.

If Stage 1 doesn't yield a response a further letter is issued to the landowner which gives them 2 weeks to reply.

If the above stages fail to resolve the issue, Roads & Transportation Services revert to the legal process however, it is hoped that this legal process is not required.

This approach is generally successful, and most issues are addressed within a reasonable time frame, albeit there are occasions that can take a longer period to resolve.

Where vegetation is considered a danger due to users and there is no safe alternative footway Roads & Transportation Services can intervene immediately and undertake the works and recover reasonable costs from the landowner/occupier.

Supplementary Question

Can statistics be provided for my local ward area and will the Spokesperson meet to discuss?

Answer

Yes happy to arrange.

Question 30 from Councillor Robin Lawson

How much money has Fife Council budgeted for spend on Active Travel projects in 2024/25? How much of this spend comes from external sources such as Transport Scotland, Sustrans and other bodies, and how much comes from within Fife Council's own resources?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Strategic Planning)

Total Active Travel funding for 2024 /25 is £3,436,662

This is split into capital funding of £3,146,950 and revenue funding of £289,712

The capital funding includes:

- Transport Scotland Active Travel Infrastructure Fund Tier 1 - £2,307,346
- Fife Council capital - £537,531
- Fife Council Section 75 agreements - £55,000
- Sustrans - £18,873
- SEStran People and Place (Capital) - £228,200

The revenue funding includes:

- Fife Council Revenue - £156,712
- SEStran People and Place (Revenue) £133,000

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In addition, the Levenmouth Connectivity Project and Glenrothes Riverside Park project secured £19.4m funding from LUF and Sustrans, and includes elements for active travel. In 2024/25 it is estimated that approximately £0.9m of active travel projects will be delivered as part of these programmes.

Supplementary Question

Would you agree that the focus of active travel spend should be on the safety of pedestrians and cyclists?

Answer

Any safety issues need to be addressed in a timely fashion.

Question 31 from Councillor Rosemary Liewald

How many structural/underfloor surveys and investigative works have been carried out on Fife Council properties within the village of Cardenden since the flooding event of August 2020?

Answer (Spokesperson for Housing and Building Services)

6 surveys have been carried out.

Supplementary Question

Can we have a report to the Cowdenbeath Area Committee addressing the issues raised on surveys due to flooding including a vacant house in Benarty with similar issues?

Answer

Yes this can be arranged.

138. FIFE COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS - LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION AND SPOKESPERSON FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

The council considered a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) asking council to appoint an elected member to the positions of Leader of the Opposition and Spokesperson for Health and Social Care (to act as council's representative on the Board of NHS Fife, to act as Chair/Vice-Chair of the Integration Joint Board, to represent Fife Council on COSLA Board (Health and Social Care) and the Fife Alcohol and Drug Partnership).

NOMINATIONS FOR LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor Barratt, proposed that Councillor Walker be appointed as Leader of the Opposition.

Decision

The council agreed unanimously that Councillor Walker be appointed as Leader of the Opposition.

Motion

Councillor Erskine, seconded by Councillor Craik, moved as follows:-

“Council agrees to:-

- (1) separate the appointment of the Chair/Vice-Chair of the Health and Social Care Integration Joint Board (IJB) from the position of Spokesperson for Health & Social Care;
- (2) subject to the agreement of (1) above, appoint Cllr Mary Bain-Lockhart to the vacant position of Spokesperson of Health & Social Care (including to act as Fife Council’s representative on the Board of NHS Fife, COSLA Board for Health & Social Care, and Fife Alcohol & Drug Partnership); and
- (3) appoint Cllr David Ross to the position of Chair/Vice-Chair of the Health and Social Care Integration Joint Board (IJB);

Following unanimous agreement to the first point of the motion, the Provost called for nominations for the Spokesperson for Health and Social Care and the Chair/Vice-Chair of the Integration Joint Board (IJB).

NOMINATIONS FOR THE SPOKESPERSON FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Councillor Erskine, seconded by Councillor Craik, proposed that Councillor Bain-Lockhart be appointed as the Spokesperson for Health and Social Care.

Councillor Beare, seconded by Councillor Walker, proposed that Councillor Liewald be appointed as the Spokesperson for Health and Social Care.

Roll Call

For Councillor Bain-Lockhart – 36 votes

Councillors Tom Adams, Mary Bain-Lockhart, Aude Boubaker-Calder, Patrick Browne, John Caffrey, James Calder, Alistair Cameron, Ian Cameron, Alex Campbell, Eugene Clarke, Fiona Corps, Altany Craik, Colin Davidson, Dave Dempsey, Sean Dillon, Linda Erskine, Peter Gulline, Judy Hamilton, Cara Hilton, Gary Holt, Margaret Kennedy, Allan Knox, Robin Lawson, Jim Leishman, James Leslie, Kathleen Leslie, Jane Ann Liston, Donald Lothian, Derek Noble, Gordon Pryde, David Ross, Jonny Tepp, Andrew Verrecchia, Darren Watt, Jan Wincott and Conner Young.

For Councillor Liewald - 33 votes

Councillors David Alexander, Blair Allan, Naz Anis-Miah, Lesley Backhouse, Alistair Bain, Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw, David Barratt, Auxi Barrera, John Beare, Ken Caldwell, Rod Cavanagh, Julie Ford, Derek Glen, Brian Goodall, Jean Hall Muir, Alycia Hayes, Stefan Hoggan, Andy Jackson, Louise Kennedy-Dalby, Rosemary Liewald, Carol Lindsay, David MacDiarmid, Lea McLelland, Lynn Mowatt, Sarah Neal, John O’Brien, Nicola Patrick, Sam Steele, Alistair Suttie, Ann Verner, Ross Vettraino, Craig Walker and Daniel Wilson.

Abstained – 1

Councillor MacDougall

Decision

The council agreed to appoint Councillor Bain-Lockhart as the Spokesperson for Health and Social Care (to act as council's representative on the Board of NHS Fife, to represent Fife Council on COSLA Board (Health and Social Care) and the Fife Alcohol and Drug Partnership).

NOMINATIONS FOR THE CHAIR/VICE-CHAIR OF THE INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD (IJB)

Councillor Erskine, seconded by Councillor Craik, proposed that Councillor Ross be appointed as the Chair/Vice-Chair of the Integration Joint Board (IJB).

Councillor Beare, seconded by Councillor Verner, proposed that Councillor Liewald be appointed as the Chair/Vice-Chair of the Integration Joint Board (IJB).

Roll Call

For Councillor Ross – 35 votes

Councillors Tom Adams, Mary Bain-Lockhart, Aude Boubaker-Calder, Patrick Browne, John Caffrey, James Calder, Alistair Cameron, Ian Cameron, Alex Campbell, Eugene Clarke, Fiona Corps, Altany Craik, Colin Davidson, Dave Dempsey, Sean Dillon, Linda Erskine, Peter Gulline, Judy Hamilton, Cara Hilton, Gary Holt, Margaret Kennedy, Allan Knox, Robin Lawson, Jim Leishman, James Leslie, Kathleen Leslie, Jane Ann Liston, Donald Lothian, Derek Noble, Gordon Pryde, David Ross, Jonny Tepp, Andrew Verrecchia, Darren Watt and Jan Wincott.

For Councillor Liewald - 33 votes

Councillors David Alexander, Blair Allan, Naz Anis-Miah, Lesley Backhouse, Alistair Bain, Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw, David Barratt, Auxi Barrera, John Beare, Ken Caldwell, Rod Cavanagh, Julie Ford, Derek Glen, Brian Goodall, Jean Hall Muir, Alycia Hayes, Stefan Hoggan, Andy Jackson, Louise Kennedy-Dalby, Rosemary Liewald, Carol Lindsay, David MacDiarmid, Lea McLelland, Lynn Mowatt, Sarah Neal, John O'Brien, Nicola Patrick, Sam Steele, Alistair Suttie, Ann Verner, Ross Vettraino, Craig Walker and Daniel Wilson.

Abstained – 1

Councillor MacDougall

Decision

The council agreed to appoint Councillor Ross as the Chair/Vice-Chair of the Integration Joint Board (IJB).

139. APPOINTMENT TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATION - REGIONAL TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP FOR SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND

The council considered a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) asking Council to appoint two elected members to the Regional Transport Partnership for the South East of Scotland (SEStran).

NOMINATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP FOR THE SOUTH EAST OF SCOTLAND (SESTRAN)

Councillor Lawson, seconded by Councillor Dempsey, proposed that Councillor James Leslie be appointed as a Fife Council representative on the Regional Transport Partnership for the South East of Scotland (SEStran).

Councillor Craik, seconded by Councillor Erskine, proposed that Councillor Ian Cameron be appointed as a Fife Council representative on the Regional Transport Partnership for the South East of Scotland (SEStran).

Decision

The council agreed to appoint Councillors James Leslie and Ian Cameron as Fife Council representatives on the Regional Transport Partnership for the South East of Scotland (SEStran).

The meeting adjourned at 12.25 pm and reconvened at 1.15 pm.

140. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

The council considered a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services requiring the council to consider motions submitted in terms of Standing Order No. 10.

Motion 1

Councillor Knox, seconded by Councillor Calder, moved as follows:-

“Council notes the August 2024 report of the Scottish Fiscal Commission says that since their December 2023 publication the pressure on the Scottish Government’s finances has increased.

The report also states that:

Decisions by the Scottish Government have played a role in these budget pressures. As well as previous public sector pay deals in Scotland being higher than in the rest of the UK, other policy commitments made by the Scottish Government such as the council tax freeze in 2024-25.

Council notes with extreme concern the announcement by the Scottish Government about forthcoming cuts to local services. This includes suspending funding for Scotland’s digital devices programme, flood defences and free school meals.

Council believes this will likely have an enormously detrimental impact to communities in Fife.

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Fife Council resolves to declare no confidence in the Scottish Government's management of Scotland's finances."

Amendment 1

Councillor Craik, seconded by Councillor Pryde, moved as follows:-

Amend to read:

"Council notes the August 2024 report of the Scottish Fiscal Commission says that since their December 2023 publication the pressure on the Scottish Government's finances has increased and that decisions taken by the Scottish Government have played a role in these budget pressures.

Council notes with extreme concern that a failure to fund local authorities properly for pay and inflation has led to cuts and delays to local services and that this will have a detrimental impact on communities in Fife.

Council therefore resolves to write to the Scottish Government expressing our concern and lack of confidence in its management of Scotland's finances and in particular in its failure to properly fund local government."

Amendment 2

Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor Glen, moved as follows:-

"Fife Council notes that for the Liberal Democrats to claim that Scottish Government decisions will have an "enormously detrimental impact to communities in Fife" takes hypocrisy to quite another level given the devastating role they had in creating austerity during the Clegg/Cameron government.

In contrast, Fife Council welcomes the additional funding that has so far awarded workers throughout the public sector wage increases above inflation and avoided strike action.

We also welcome the additional funding that has protected vulnerable people from the cost-of-living crisis.

The Scottish Government must balance the books, cannot overspend, and has limited borrowing powers.

Consequently, savings that had to be made to cover the increased costs are regrettable. However, the cumulative impact of the financial challenges are a direct result of continual Westminster mismanagement and cannot be directed at Holyrood.

Fife Council also notes that the Scottish Fiscal commission state that "In advance of the UK Budget on 30 October, there is considerable uncertainty around the Scottish Government's funding for 2024-25 while UK Government policies contribute to put pressures on the Scottish budget"

Fife Council notes that the Institute for Fiscal Studies in response to the statement on Scottish Government savings said " As the Scottish Fiscal Commission has highlighted, the last few years have seen the Scottish Government increase public sector pay, and roll out new, more generous social security benefits. These are legitimate things to prioritise".

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“And as we have highlighted before, there is a case for giving the Scottish Government some additional borrowing powers to address in-year public service spending pressures, as well as the benefit spending pressures and tax shortfalls that it can already borrow for. The Scottish Government has far fewer options to address pressures than the UK government.”

With the agreement of the Provost, the mover of the motion agreed to accept Amendment 1 subject to minor amendments. The conjoined motion was agreed as follows:-

“Council notes the August 2024 report of the Scottish Fiscal Commission says that since their December 2023 publication the pressure on the Scottish Government’s finances has increased and that decisions taken by the Scottish Government have played a role in these budget pressures.

Council notes with extreme concern that a failure to fund local authorities properly for pay and inflation has led to cuts and delays to local services and that this will have a detrimental impact on communities in Fife.

Concerns include suspending funding for Scotland’s digital devices programme, flood defences and free school meals.

Council therefore resolves to write to the Scottish Government expressing our concern and increasing lack of confidence in its management of Scotland’s finances and in particular in its failure to properly fund local government.”

Roll Call

For the Conjoined Motion – 36 votes

Councillors Tom Adams, Mary Bain-Lockhart, Aude Boubaker-Calder, Patrick Browne, John Caffrey, James Calder, Alistair Cameron, Ian Cameron, Alex Campbell, Eugene Clarke, Fiona Corps, Altany Craik, Colin Davidson, Dave Dempsey, Sean Dillon, Linda Erskine, Peter Gulline, Judy Hamilton, Cara Hilton, Gary Holt, Margaret Kennedy, Allan Knox, Robin Lawson, Jim Leishman, James Leslie, Kathleen Leslie, Jane Ann Liston, Donald Lothian, Julie MacDougall, Derek Noble, Gordon Pryde, David Ross, Jonny Tepp, Andrew Verrecchia, Darren Watt and Jan Wincott.

For Amendment 2 - 33 votes

Councillors David Alexander, Blair Allan, Naz Anis-Miah, Lesley Backhouse, Alistair Bain, Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw, David Barratt, Auxi Barrera, John Beare, Ken Caldwell, Rod Cavanagh, Julie Ford, Derek Glen, Brian Goodall, Jean Hall Muir, Alycia Hayes, Stefan Hoggan, Andy Jackson, Louise Kennedy-Dalby, Rosemary Liewald, Carol Lindsay, David MacDiarmid, Lea McLelland, Lynn Mowatt, Sarah Neal, John O’Brien, Nicola Patrick, Sam Steele, Alistair Suttie, Ann Verner, Ross Vettriano, Craig Walker and Daniel Wilson.

Decision

Having received a majority of votes, the conjoined motion was accordingly carried.

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Motion 2

Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Beare, moved as follows:-

“Council notes with regret the recent statements, by the Westminster Prime Minister on August 27th “There is a budget coming in October and it’s going to be painful.”, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer who on July 29th advised that “difficult decisions” to find £5.5 billion of savings this year and £8.1 billion next year, will be taken, which demonstrate that after 14 years ‘austerity’ will not end.

Council also notes that on May 19th Wes Streeting (Secretary of State for Health and Social Care) stated “All roads do lead back to Westminster because even though this (Health) is devolved, decisions taken in Westminster have an impact on the NHS across the Whole Country”.

Council notes that on September 3rd the Scottish Government has had to make £500 million in savings to ease “enormous and growing pressure on the public finances”.

Council notes that according to the Wales Governance Centre at Cardiff University, the Welsh government is facing "serious budgetary challenges" in the region of £683 million, or face cuts to non-protected areas.

Council also notes that ‘two child benefit cap’ which impacts some 2,100 families in Fife is to remain, That some 65,871 pensioners in Fife and 1 million households across Scotland will lose their Winter Fuel Payments, that the energy price cap will be increased by 10% in October impacting almost every household in Fife.

Given the above, Council seeks a report by the Executive Director for Finance and Corporate Services to be presented to the Cabinet Committee or the full Council by the end of the year as to what measures Fife Council can continue to take or may seek to take, to address the impact of continuing ‘austerity’.

Amendment 1

Councillor Calder, seconded by Councillor Boubaker-Calder, moved as follows:-

“Remove paragraphs 1 and 2 and replace with:

Council notes with concern recent statements from both the UK and Scottish Governments detailing budgetary pressures.

Change paragraph 3 to:

Council notes that on September 3rd the Scottish Government has chosen to make £500 million in cuts, partly driven by previous choices such as the Council Tax freeze taken earlier this year. This is reflected in the Scottish Fiscal Commission Report.

Remove paragraph 4

Change paragraph 5 to:

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Council also notes that the 'two-child benefit cap' will remain affecting 2,100 families in Fife. Council also notes the Scottish Government decision to replicate the UK Government decision to restrict Winter Fuel Payments which will affect 65,781 pensioners in Fife while the Energy Price Cap is set to rise by 10% in October. Council further notes the decision by the Scottish Government to scrap the expansion of free school meals for P6 and P7 pupils.

Change Paragraph 6 to:

Council requests a report to Cabinet Committee by the end of the year to detail how Fife Council can address the impacts of recent budgetary decisions made by the Scottish and UK Governments.”

Amendment 2

Councillor Ross, seconded by Councillor Craik, moved as follows:-

“Delete all and replace

Whilst Council recognises the very difficult financial position inherited by the newly elected Labour Government, Council notes with concern that the Government’s decisions to withdraw the Winter Fuel Allowance from those pensioners not in receipt of pension credits and not to immediately remove the ‘two child benefit cap’ will ultimately have consequences for pensioners and families in Fife.

Council further notes its disappointment that, whilst facing its own financial challenges, the Scottish Government has also chosen to withdraw the winter fuel allowance on a similar basis in Scotland.

Council notes that the Cabinet Committee at its meeting on 12th September 2024 agreed a report on Cost of Living Support – Funding Priorities, and that as part of its winter programme, the Council will be conducting another campaign to encourage the take up of pension credits, including a direct mailing to over 400 pensioners identified as eligible through the Low Income Family Tracker.

Council therefore notes and endorses the continuing actions being undertaken by the Council to mitigate the Cost of Living Crisis and requests that the Leader of the Council writes to the UK Government urging it to reconsider and reverse its decisions on the winter fuel allowance and ‘two child benefit cap’ and to the Scottish Government urging it to continue the universal provision of the winter fuel allowance in Scotland.

The mover of Amendment 1, Councillor Calder, advised he wished to withdraw his amendment.

Roll Call

For the Motion – 34 votes

Councillors David Alexander, Blair Allan, Naz Anis-Miah, Lesley Backhouse, Alistair Bain, Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw, David Barratt, Auxil Barrera, John Beare, Ken Caldwell, Rod Cavanagh, Julie Ford, Derek Glen, Brian Goodall, Jean Hall Muir, Alycia Hayes, Stefan Hoggan, Andy Jackson, Louise Kennedy-Dalby, Rosemary Liewald, Carol Lindsay, David MacDiarmid, Julie MacDougall,

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Lea McLelland, Lynn Mowatt, Sarah Neal, John O'Brien, Nicola Patrick, Sam Steele, Alistair Suttie, Ann Verner, Ross Vettraino, Craig Walker and Daniel Wilson.

For Amendment 2 - 31 votes

Councillors Tom Adams, Mary Bain-Lockhart, Patrick Browne, John Caffrey, James Calder, Alistair Cameron, Ian Cameron, Alex Campbell, Eugene Clarke, Fiona Corps, Altany Craik, Colin Davidson, Dave Dempsey, Sean Dillon, Linda Erskine, Peter Gulline, Judy Hamilton, Cara Hilton, Gary Holt, Allan Knox, Jim Leishman, Kathleen Leslie, Jane Ann Liston, Donald Lothian, Derek Noble, Gordon Pryde, David Ross, Jonny Tepp, Andrew Verrecchia, Darren Watt and Jan Wincott.

Decision

Having received a majority of votes, the motion was accordingly carried.

The meeting adjourned twice during consideration of the above item.

141. BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE PROVOST AS A MATTER OF URGENCY

No business was brought forward under this item.